Don't Worry, Do Something, Then Be Happy

Summary

This lesson helps students develop strategies for managing or reducing stress.

Main Core Tie

Health Education I (7-8)

Strand 2: MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL HEALTH (MEH) Standard HI.MEH.1:

Materials

- Poster:
  "I don't think I can handle this"
  "Don't Worry, Be Happy" (Bobby McFerrin, *Best of Bobby McFerrin*, Blue Note, 1996)
  Marble (or similar) for each student
- Worksheet:
  "Don't Worry, Do Something, Then Be Happy"

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will develop strategies for managing or reducing stress.

Instructional Procedures

Lesson at a Glance

- Sing or play the song "Don't Worry, Be Happy" and discuss ideas of effective stress management.
- Complete marble in shoe activity.
- Discuss techniques for reducing and managing stress.
- Complete the "Don't Worry, Do Something" worksheet.

New vocabulary

- stressors

Introduction (Setting Focus)

Do the following:

- Display the poster "I Can't Handle This" and discuss what could happen to cause someone to feel this way.
- Play or speak the chorus of the song "Don't Worry, Be Happy." While the song is playing, give examples of stressful situations (a report that's due, not getting along with friends, not having enough money).
- Discuss whether it works to just "don't worry, be happy" when you're stressed.

Body (Strategies/Activities)

Marble Activity

- Give each student a marble and instruct students to put the marbles in their shoes right under the foot.
- Take the class for a short walk. Walk flat-footed, faster, harder or skip.
- Return to the classroom and discuss these ideas:
  - How did you enjoy the walk?
  - What part of the walk was most uncomfortable?
  - What could the marble represent?
  - What are some symptoms of stress?
  - How could a person fix the discomfort with the marble?

What kinds of behaviors and thoughts could a person do to reduce the stress in life?
What is the difference between "Don't Worry, Be Happy" and "Don't Worry, Do Something, Then Be Happy?"

Discuss the following ideas of stress management:

Step 1: Identify the stressor.

Students name symptoms of stress experienced (i.e., walking with a marble in your shoe).

Step 2: Brainstorm possible solutions.

During brainstorming all solutions are accepted without judgment. Discuss a wide variety of solutions to the marble problem and write the ideas on the board.

Possible answers:

Hop, crush it, move it to the arch, numb the foot, take shoe off, cut a hole in the shoe, just don't think about it, take it out, get used to it, break your arm, use crutches, cut foot off, or walk on tiptoes.

Step 3: Select the best positive solution or solutions. From the list of solutions, find best and most positive solutions that help reduce the stress without creating additional stress.

Encourage students to select positive solution for the marble problem. Discuss how positive solutions actually help reduce stress by reducing the problem, not adding to it.

Step 4: Do it! Discuss this importance of taking action and doing something about the stress in our lives. Wouldn't it be foolish to walk with a marble in your shoe and not do anything about it? Remember, don't worry, do something, and then you can be happy.

Step 5: Evaluate (repeat the steps if necessary). Discuss the various solutions to the marble problem. Evaluate whether some solutions are more beneficial than others Note: some students may choose a solution other than taking the marble out. Nevertheless, collect all the marbles before students leave class.

Closure (Wrap-Up and Extension)

Students complete the "Don't Worry, Do Something, Then Be Happy " worksheet.

Share various strategies for managing stress.

Authors

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